Historic Environment Scotland
Àrainneachd Eachdraidheil Alba

Scheduled Monument Clearance: Report On Handling

Case information

Reference/Case ID	**201504576**
File Reference	**AMH/5797/1/1**

Scheduled Monument	Arichonan, township		
Index no	M5797	**Grid Ref**	NR774912 177400.0000 691200.0000

Date of Application	20/10/2015	**Application Received**	20/10/2015

Summary

1. The application is for the erection of a number of signs, to discourage access to the buildings due to health and safety concerns. This report recommends approval subject to conditions.

Background

2. The monument comprises a deserted township which occupies a clearing in a forestry plantation at the head of Caol Scotnish. The surviving buildings within the settlement include a house rebuilt as a shepherd's cottage (known as Structure 12 in the FCS site description) with adjacent fank. Photos of the west gable of this house taken in September 2015 show evidence of inward rotation, which was not present during visits by HS staff in summer 2014. This presents a health and safety concern as the site is presented to the public as a monument.

Proposals

3. It is proposed to erect temporary signage on earthfast posts, in order to deter people from entering the cottage while it remains in an unsafe condition. The main

ingress to the interior is via two doorways in the south wall, and it is proposed that one sign be erected immediately outside each entrance.

4. The applicant has advised that while they are applying for two signs, they would be willing to take advice from HES on a further three signs. Further consideration to these additional signs has been given below.

Representations received

5. No representations have been received.

Report

Policy considerations

6. The application should be viewed with the following legislative and policy considerations in mind:

AMAAA 1979
The assessment below relies on the following elements of the Act:

- Part 1 Section 2 - Control of works affecting an ancient monument.
- Part 1 Section 2 (3) – authorises works where Scottish Ministers or Historic Environment Scotland have granted consent (scheduled monument consent) for the execution of the works where the works are executed in accordance with the terms of the consent and of any conditions attached to the consent.
- Part 1 Section 2 (4) - allows consent to be granted with conditions.
- Part 1 Section 2 (5a) – allows Historic Environment Scotland to include a condition reserving specified details of the works.

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)
The assessment below relies on the following paragraphs of SHEP:

3.16. Works on scheduled monuments should therefore normally be the minimum level of intervention that is consistent with conserving what is culturally significant in a monument.
3.20. Where change is proposed, it should be carefully considered, based on good authority, sensitively designed, properly planned and executed, and where appropriate in the context of an individual monument, reversible.

Assessment

7. It is proposed that two timber stakes would be driven 1ft/30cm into the ground, one in front of each of the doorways on the south elevation of the monument. These would each support a sign setting out the dangerous nature of the structure. Three other

signposts have been proposed (two outside the opposing elevation, one outside the east gable end) as ‘possible additional signs depending on advice from HES’. Our advice (relayed to the applicant via email) is that the two signs appear adequate to address the health and safety issue, and this aspect of the application has not been further addressed in this assessment.

8. The two timber stakes would impact on any underlying archaeological material to a depth of 30cm, and a radius of 10cm approximately. This material would be outwith the visible dwellings and away from the visible junctions between the cottage and the adjacent sheep fank.

9. The proposed posts would represent clearly recognisable intrusions into any archaeological material present, should excavation be undertaken in the future. Moreover, it is unlikely that buried remains in this area of the settlement are primary elements in the cultural significance of the monument, as rubbish pits are unlikely to be found in close proximity to the doorways of the cottage. The stakes would not intrude into floor areas of the dwellings, and would not affect the ability to archaeologically assess the potentially important relationship between the cottage and the sheep fank. They would be a very visible presence, but would not alter the ability to understand and appreciate the monument in its setting.

10. The location of the postholes could be pre-excavated under archaeological control, but the areas of excavation would be very small and unlikely to reveal material of significant archaeological interest as a consequence. Therefore, the value of archaeological work being undertaken in mitigation is very slight to insignificant. No such mitigation has been proposed, and it is not proposed that this should be conditioned into this consent.

11. The warning signs would significantly limit the risk to the public from falling masonry, and allow time to agree the best way forward for management of the site. The proposed works would therefore represent a public benefit in the short term, in that they would assist in the mitigation of a health and safety risk.

Other material considerations, including impact of the works on Protected Species and Places

12. The applicant has also proposed (at section 7 on the application form ‘other information relevant to this application’) that a site meeting with HES should be carried out in order to establish future management of the site.

Conclusion

13. The proposed works would not have a significant adverse impact on the cultural significance of the monument, either in direct or indirect terms. The two stakeholes could only be mitigated through archaeological excavation in advance of the insertion of the stakes, but as the information that would be revealed would not contribute to an understanding and appreciation of the national importance of the monument, it is considered that this mitigation would not be useful in this case. On that basis, the

application does not conflict with paragraph 3.16 of SHEP as outlined above. It would also deliver a public health and safety benefit.

14. Conditions should be included to control the timing of the works, and the removal of the signs once agreement has been reached on future management of the site.

Recommended decision

15. The works proposed are considered acceptable in meeting the terms of national policy for scheduled monuments, and also accounting for other material considerations.

Conditions

1. Prior to any works related to this consent commencing on site, a works timetable including an intended completion date should be provided in writing to Historic Environment Scotland. Any alteration to this timetable should also be provided in writing to Historic Environment Scotland.

Reason: so that Historic Environment Scotland has the opportunity to inspect the site during or upon completion of the works.

2. The signs will be removed once the masonry has been made safe.

Reason: to ensure that the signs are removed once the health and safety risk has been adequately mitigated.

Appendix A Supporting Documents

1. OS Map of designated area - Arichonan OS map.pdf
2. Aerial of designated area - Arichonan Aerial.pdf
3. OS close up of sign locations - Arichonan Structure 12 OS plan.pdf
4. Aerial close up of sign locations - ArichonanStructure12 Aerial.pdf
5. Photograph - FC Site Visit 2015 Composite of Building A1 from S.JPG

Approval

Officer	**John Malcolm**	**Date**	27/10/15
Approved by	**John Raven**	**Date**	27/10/15